

Lack of connectivity to places of tourism

1457. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the problem relating to the lack. of connectivity of the various States and the places of tourist interest in the country have come to the notice of Government;

(b) if so, the details of States/places of tourist interest which are not having proper connectivity; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by Government to redress this problem and to improve the tourism of the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism has taken up the issue of improvement of road connectivity to the major tourist sites including the World Heritage Sites, Buddhist Sites and other important tourist destinations with Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways to improve the connectivity. The Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways has responded favourably.

**Ropeway for Tawang Monastery in
Arunachal Pradesh**

†1458. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Buddhist Monastery at the famous Buddhist tourist place Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh is the second largest Buddhist Monastery in Asia;

(b) whether it is also a fact that foundation stone for making a ropeway of about 1.5 km long was laid on October, 2002 to connect the said monastery with Ani Gompa and to facilitate the tourists;

(c) whether it is also a fact that no action has been taken for the construction of the same so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[5 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Buddhist Monastery at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh is one of the largest in Asia. The President of India laid the foundation stone of the project for construction of a Fixed Grip Monocable Jigback 2-seater cabin lift ropeway of 1176 metre between Tawang Monastery and Ani Gumpa in Arunachal Pradesh in 2002.

(c) and (d) The project was sanctioned by Ministry of Development of North East Region (DONER) for Rs. 330.89 lakh on 17.05.2006 from the Non Lapsable Pool of Central Resources after techno-economic examination by the Ministries concerned. The first installment of Rs. 104.23 lakh was released on 19.07.2006.

Rain water harvesting

†1459. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the underground water table has been declining for last several years due to continuous ineffectiveness of rain water harvesting system;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the average annual decline in water level during the last three years;

(c) whether Government have fixed any targets for rain water harvesting to make rain water harvesting system more effective; and

(d) if so, the targets thereof and by when the target of at least 50 per cent rain water harvesting in the country will be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The ground water levels have been declining in isolated pockets in various parts of the country due to excessive withdrawal of ground water. The average annual rate of decline is 5 to 10 cm/year in specific areas. The State-wise numbers of blocks/mandals/talukas having declining trend is given in the enclosed Statement (See below).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.